



**Filmmaker Joe Berlinger (“Crude”) joins WESTDOC 2010’s Non-Fiction, Keynote Conversation.**

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(June 22, 2010, Los Angeles, Calif.) Co-founders Richard Propper and Chuck Braverman are pleased to announce that acclaimed filmmaker Joe Berlinger will be featured at the WESTDOC Conference’s **Non-Fiction, Keynote Conversation** on September 14th, 2010. The award-winning filmmaker’s most recent documentary **Crude** is now the focus of an important First Amendment rights case and appeal.

**WESTDOC: The West Coast Reality and Documentary Conference** (September 13-15, 2010) gathers producers and directors of non-fiction/documentary and reality TV programming with executives who create such programs. More than 100 industry speakers are expected to participate in the three-day conference of panels, case studies, and exclusive networking sessions.

Berlinger will address the state of documentary production and distribution today as well as his film **Crude** in a moderated question-and-answer session. Three years in the making, this *cinéma-vérité* feature tells the epic story of one of the largest and most controversial environmental lawsuits on the planet: a lawsuit by Ecuadorians against Chevron over pollution in the Amazon. Known as the “Amazon Chernobyl” case, **Crude** is a real-life, high stakes legal drama, set against a backdrop of the environmental movement, global politics, celebrity activism, human rights advocacy, the media, multinational corporate power and rapidly-disappearing indigenous cultures. Chevron is currently seeking 600 hours of footage from the film in an effort to shore up their case in the long-running lawsuit. Lawyers for Berlinger are arguing on First Amendment grounds that his material is protected by journalistic privilege. The subpoena is now being appealed. Berlinger’s other celebrated feature documentaries include *Brother’s Keeper*, *Paradise Lost* and *Metallica: Some Kind of Monster*. In addition to his feature documentary work, Berlinger has produced and directed much fiction and non-fiction television. He is co-executive producer and director of the Sundance Channel’s *Iconoclasts*, now in its fourth season. In 2006, he won an “Outstanding Nonfiction Series” Emmy as co-executive producer of The History Channel’s *10 Days that Unexpectedly Changed America*.

For the second year, WESTDOC will be held at the Doubletree Guest Suites Santa Monica. More than 30 panels are scheduled, covering a wide range of subjects such as financing, shooting and selling a documentary or reality TV one-off or series. Contemporary topics covered will also include distribution models from theatrical presentation to digital platforms. Among the companies now slated to participate are: Discovery Channel, TLC, Animal Planet, Spike TV, National Geographic Channel, ITVS, TV Land, SyFy, History Channel, WE, OWN, RDF, BBC, Lonely Planet, and The Doc Channel, with more networks to be announced shortly. The conference’s climatic event is an all day *PitchFest* where new projects are pitched directly to network and development executives in front of a live audience for potential acquisition or co-production funding.

Open to all documentary and reality TV professionals, more than 400 people attended the inaugural WESTDOC in 2009. Registration information as well as an updated list of panels, speakers, master classes and instructions on how to participate in *PitchFest* can be found at: [www.theWESTDOC.com](http://www.theWESTDOC.com). Conference fees cover all aspects of the day including breakfast and lunch sessions. Discount rates are now available. Updates will also be posted on WESTDOC’s Facebook.com page and via twitter.com/theWESTDOC (#WESTDOC2010). Further information on Joe Berlinger and “Crude” can be found at: [www.crudethemovie.com](http://www.crudethemovie.com).

Press and media inquiries: [press@theWESTDOC.com](mailto:press@theWESTDOC.com)